

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above identified application is respectfully solicited in light of the above amendments and the following remarks and arguments.

The Present Invention

To briefly summarize, the single base Claim 1 of the present application defines the invention as comprising a spinneret assembly for melt spinning a plurality of strand-like filaments, which includes a plurality of internal parts composed of at least one inlet component 2 and a spinneret plate 3 which are braced relative each other in a housing 1 by a supporting means. The inlet component 2 includes a melt inlet 5 and defines a distributor chamber 15 on the downstream side thereof, and the spinneret plate 3 forms a melt outlet by means of a plurality of spin holes 4. To achieve a self-sealing between the internal parts during operation, the invention provides for arranging at least one expansion body 8 between the housing 1 and the upstream side of the inlet component 2. The expansion body 8 is formed of a material which has a higher thermal expansion coefficient than the housing material, and it generates, upon being heated, a pressure force inside the housing which provides for a self-sealing bracing of the inlet component toward the spinneret plate.

In the embodiment of Fig. 1, and as particularly defined in Claim 13, the housing includes an integral flange 6, and the expansion body is arranged between the flange and the upstream side of the inlet component 2.

Claim 14 and new Claim 16 are specific to the embodiment of Figs. 2-3, wherein the housing is of rectangular

configuration, with the upstream side of the housing including a cover 16, and with the cover including threaded openings 21, 34 which mount screw caps 7.1, 7.2. The screw caps engage respective pressure plates 19, 30 which in turn overlie respective ones of the expansion bodies 8.1, 8.2.

Claim 15 is specific to the embodiment of Figs. 4-5, wherein the housing is of tubular configuration, with screw caps 7.1-7.4 disposed in threaded openings in the cover which engage the pressure plate 19, and with the pressure plate bearing against the expansion bodies 8.1-8.4.

The §102 Rejection

In the Official Actions, Claims 1-6, 8-9, 11-13, and 15 were rejected as being anticipated by Beeck et al. (DE 199 35 982). The Beeck et al. patent is discussed and distinguished on page 2 of the specification of the present application, and as will be apparent, the patent fails to suggest the particular arrangement of structural components as now recited in base Claim 1. In particular, Beeck et al. does not disclose or suggest the presence of an inlet component which defines a distributor chamber on the downstream side thereof, nor does it disclose the use of an expansion body interposed between the housing and an upstream side of an inlet component so as to provide a self sealing bracing of the inlet component toward the spinneret, as now clearly recited in base Claim 1.

The §103 Rejections

Claim 14 which is specifically directed to the embodiment of Figs. 2-3, was rejected as being unpatentable over Beeck et al. in view of Kilsdonk. Kilsdonk discloses a spinneret of rectangular configuration, but it does not supply the deficiencies of the Beeck et al. patent as set forth above.

Thus Claim 14 is also seen to patentably define over the cited prior patents.

Claims 1-6 and 11-14 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lenk '379 in view of Trott '498. In the Amendment filed May 11, 2006, the applicant presented a comprehensive argument that the proposed combination would not be made by one skilled in the art, since it would counteract the desired "automatic seals" of Lenk '379. In the interest of brevity, this argument is repeated and incorporated herein by reference. In addition, the structure as now specifically recited in base Claim 1 functions to move the inlet component 2 "toward the spinneret plate" to provide a self sealing bracing of the inlet component, whereas Lenk '379 provides a structure wherein the piston 5 is designed to move away from the spinneret. Thus Lenk '379 provides a totally different concept for effecting the desired seals, and only with the benefit of considerable hindsight could it be said that Trott would suggest the fundamental modification of Lenk which would have been necessary to achieve the presently claimed invention. Withdrawal of the rejection is accordingly solicited.

Claims 1-4, 6, and 10-13 were rejected as being unpatentable over Kretzschmar '947 in view of Trott '498. Kretzschmar '947 discloses in Fig. 5 a spin beam nozzle package wherein a nozzle pot 6 is inserted into a receptacle 2. The nozzle pot 6 consists of layered components including a nozzle plate 9, a filter housing 10, and a thread nut 11. A packing ring 20 is positioned so as to be pressed by the melt to form a seal between the filter housing 10 and the nozzle plate 9, note column 8, lines 15-24.

Base Claim 1, as now presented, clearly distinguishes the present invention from the structure of Kretzschmar, by

reciting an inlet component which defines a distributor chamber on its downstream side, and wherein an expansion body is arranged on the upstream side of the expansion body. Nothing comparable to this structure is disclosed by Kretzschmar, even when it is considered collectively with Trott.

Claims 1-8 and 13 were rejected as being unpatentable over Schroeder '052 in view of Trott. Claim 1 as now presented is seen to clearly distinguish the present invention from the disclosure of Schroeder, by reciting that the expansion body of the present invention is positioned and constructed to move the inlet component toward the spinneret plate. Schroeder discloses no comparable structure, even when considered collectively with Trott.

Claim 9 was rejected under a proposed combination of any of Lenk, Kretzschmar, and Schroeder with Trott and either DD 125 421 or DE 199 32 852. The two cited German documents do not supply the deficiencies of the primary references as discussed above, even when considered collectively, and it is submitted that Claim 9 is also allowable over the cited prior art.

Claim 15 was rejected under a proposed combination of any of Lenk, Kretzschmar, and Schroeder with Trott and Goossens or Lenk '444. This rejection is also seen to be untenable for the reason that neither Goossens or Lenk '444 supplies the deficiencies of the primary references as set forth above, even when considered collectively.

Claim 14 was rejected under a proposed combination of either Kretzschmar or Schroeder, in view of Trott and Kilsdonk. Kilsdonk does not supply the deficiencies of the primary references as discussed above, even when considered collectively, and thus this rejection should also be

Appl. No.: 10/812,123  
Amdt. dated August 21, 2006  
Reply to Office Action of May 22, 2006

withdrawn.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, all of the pending claims are seen to be in condition for immediate allowance, and such action is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Christopher J. Gegg  
Registration No. 50,857

Customer No. 00826  
ALSTON & BIRD LLP  
Bank of America Plaza  
101 South Tryon Street, Suite 4000  
Charlotte, NC 28280-4000  
Tel Charlotte Office (704) 444-1000  
Fax Charlotte Office (704) 444-1111  
#30051886v1

ELECTRONICALLY FILED USING THE EFS-WEB ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE ON August 21, 2006.